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'If You Can't Help Uncle, Then Get Off His Back'

CPYRGHT

Editor: I was interested to hear Thomas Braden report on some of the controversial activities of the Central Intelligence Agency while he was associated with them. I failed to find anything to deplore unless it was that the student organizations, unions, et al, lacked the patriotism and initiative to do voluntarily and gladly the good work they eventually did at the CIA's suggestion.

Most everybody agrees that the work done was good and needed to be done—and could be done better under their several auspices than directly by a government agency. I would have been happy to have my taxes so used—and rather so, than in some other ways I can think of.

So far as I have heard, they weren't coerced. The goals were honorable. They were not asked to perjure themselves or do anything shameful.

I can't believe that a good act well done suddenly becomes immoral and sinister just because it was done anonymously—sub rosa. Aren't organizations, as such, allowed to be patriotic and help a government agency of their own free will any more, without shame or outrage?

Our country was in a tough spot then, just as it's in a tough spot now. In such a predicament it nauseates me a little to see so many people apparently eager to pounce on sore spots and rake them raw — and that so many more are so ready to silently nod assent.

Just because we have lately rediscovered that appropriate protest can be useful, admirable, and even heroic on occasion, all at once everybody wants to get in on the act. "Gather round! Spit on Uncle Sam and be a big brave hero — everyone else does!"

He may have his faults. I know he has his problems. But you won't find a better Uncle this wide world over! If you can't find it in your heart to lend a hand, for crying out loud, get off his back!

—DAVID M. CAMPBELL,
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